

PS 2137

.J7 I5

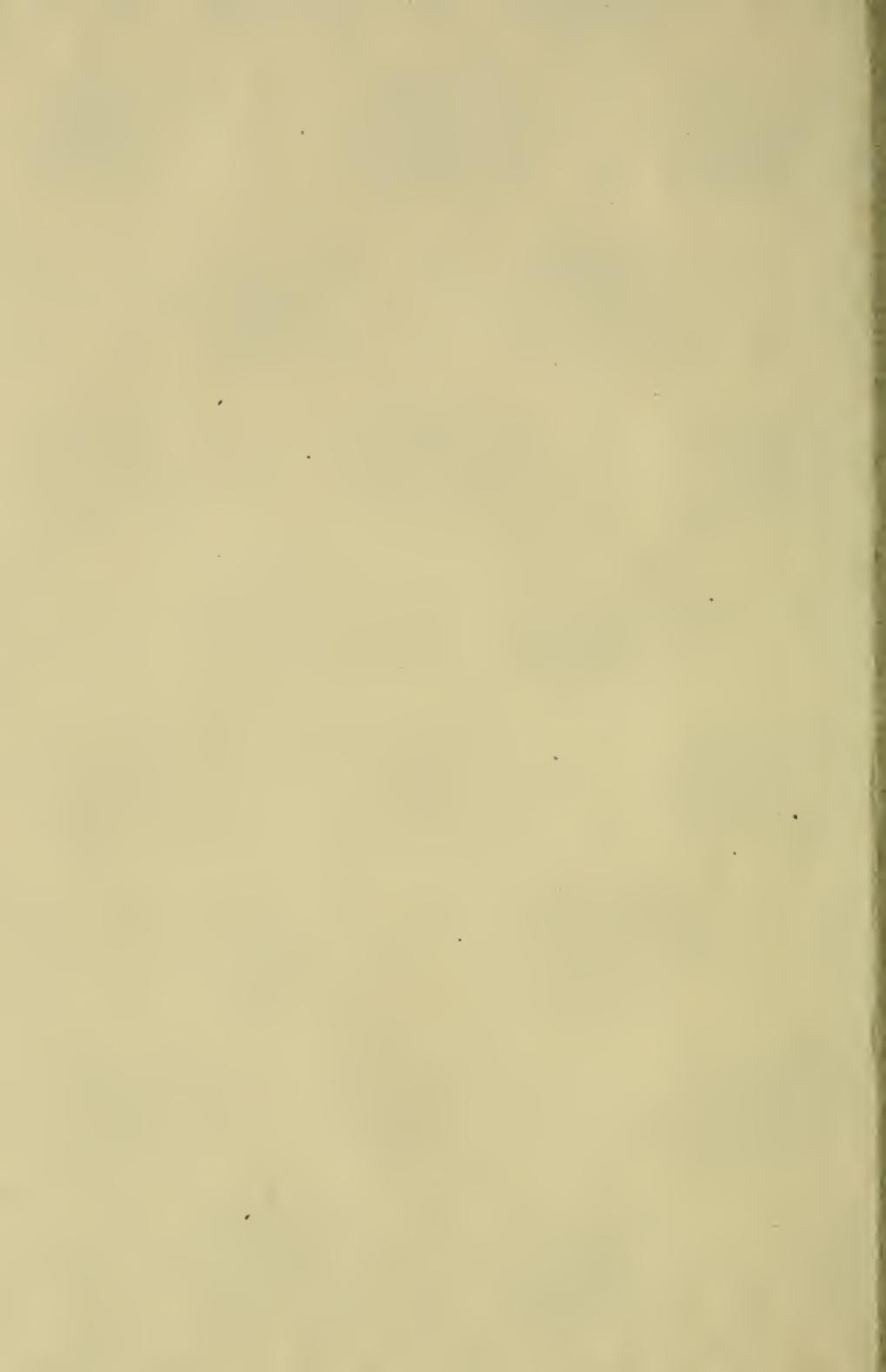
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00002957929







L.C

c376
125

IMPERIUM:

A SATIRE.

IMPERIUM:

A SATIRE.

By
John P. Webster
New York, N.Y.

5913 L

PS 2137
J7 I5

Copyright,
By J. P. JOHNSTON,
1880.

Millvale Branch

P. 2.

Ye laureled Bards! whose proud poetic fame
Forbids all mention of my humbler name;
Champions of Freedom! whose emblazoned shields
Show triumphs wrought on Legendary fields;
Who vaunt the trophies of her prowess shown
In other lands,—who lately in our own,
When Slavery's voice proclaimed her daring creed,
Launched forth her lightnings with unsparing speed;
Now, Thraldom threatens North and South alike,
Ye sheathe her weapons, and refuse to strike!
Hence! let my hand the stern defiance yield,
Whose flashing cohorts soon shall sweep the field.

WHEN FRAUD usurps the functions of the STATE ;
When banished POWER its grasp would recreate,
By base perversion of the Public Will ;
When Party Fee absorbs the STATESMAN'S skill ;
When high TRIBUNALS thwart the Public Voice,
And foist to place the creature of their choice ;
When Bayonets must keep *the mob* at bay,
While leagued CORRUPTION grasps the reins of sway ,
When CORPORATION, by the power of LAW,
Works out its will, then bids the hounds withdraw ;
When COURTS exist to shelter public vice,
And prove the truth that Judges have their price ;
When LEGISLATION drives a Shylock trade,
And " booms " the Bill for which the bribe is paid ;
When Money counts, and still each FACTION-KING
Knows just how much it costs to buy the RING ;
When POLITICIANS, watchful of the plan,
Forestall the suffrage of each honest man ;
When plugged CONVENTIONS, working for their pay ,
Like well trained " NINES," obey their Backer's sway ;
When Party Leaders, schooled among " the boys,"
Know each one's worth, for poise or counterpoise ;
When Party Tricksters, digitally nice,
With dextrous skill can flip the golden dice ;
When Party Clansmen, with the slogan cry,
Bulldoze and silence those they will not buy ;
When the MACHINE, well oiled and smoothly run,
Grinds out its choice and leaves the People none,—
What then remains ? Let freeborn millions speak !
One Voice—the last ! ere POWER your doom shall wreak .

IMPERIUM : A SATIRE.

IMMORTAL HOMER ! whose resounding name
 Forever feeds the trumpet tones of Fame ;
 Whose scroll of song and bright unfolding page
 Reveals new marvels to each wondering age,—
 Bids patient Science, in her native clime,
 Dig treasures hoarded from the dawn of time—
 Has taught our own, what else it ne'er had learned,
 The lesson long by skeptic blindness spurned :
 That page whose light shall flash the ages through,
 Whate'er it claim beside, must yet be *true*!
 Great sire of poets ! whose promiscuous race
 Thy gods themselves would hardly hope to trace,
 I, all unfitted for the master's role,
 Claim only this : The kindred of the soul.
 The soul of Truth, inspired at Nature's birth,
 Is still the same in every clime of earth.
 Was all unfolded in thy matchless verse ?
 Let classic souls its echoed strains rehearse ;
 Whilst I, unskilled in thy immortal tone,
 Find yet some mortal meaning in my own,
 To show the race of despots, fools and knaves,
 This fearless truth—All are not made for slaves.

When late the chief of Trans-Atlantic song, |
 Expelled by hatred and pursued by wrong,

Left the proud isle which saw his genius rise,
 To find a home 'neath more congenial skies,
 What hounds of malice hung upon his back,
 And mouthed their hate along the exile's track !
 What slanderous serpents round his pathway clung,
 And hissed their venom o'er the heart they stung !
 'Twas then, exalted by the world's disdain,
 His song flashed forth in Freedom's loftiest strain.
 Like that Apocalyptic angel, viewed
 By John, his voice, as robed with power he stood,
 With pillared feet upon the land and sea,
 Proclaimed the hour when nations must be free !
 He gave the book, whose words of bitter-sweet
 The prostrate nations, groaning, soon shall eat ;
 Then gave to Greece, the land of Homer's fame,
 A poet's life, a hero's deathless name.

Alas, that still the record must be shown,
 From strongest lights the deepest shadows thrown ;
 That fiery spirits, sent to teach mankind,
 In their own souls their recompense must find.
 Still must we gauge by long contested creeds
 The generous impulse wrought in fearless deeds ;
 He loved his fellows, yet he loved not those
 Who by their creed make all mankind their foes.
 Behold the mystery and its meaning scan ;
 The key is God's great compensative plan.
 All things that are in Nature's boundless range,
 Fulfill their course by compensative change.
 Flame feeds on fuel ; ice is coldly fixed ;
 In him the elements were fiercely mixed ;
 And from the conflict of his being came
 Vast cloudlike folds and thunders mixed with flame.
 He wrought his message, and he went his way ;
 God grant him mercy on that fierier day !
 He felt his need, and owned it at the last ;
 In prayer for this his outworn spirit passed ;

By suffering marred, as all such natures are,
And marred by sin, let not detraction mar !

Since then, what song is heard in Freedom's praise ?
What fearless page her glowing name displays ?
A few faint echoes of each outworn chime,
And tinkling phrase, grown thin by constant rhyme,
Are all ; the rest perverted to the wage,
And riffraff nonsense of Sensation's page.
His verse still forms on fair Columbia's brow
Her choicest wreath—a debt repaid—and how ?
Repaid by her—unnamed, yet known too well—
That vile procress to the joys of hell !
When to the winds her vampire tale was cast,
Whose curse, full-fledged—come home to roost at last—
Makes Plymouth Preacher all that's vilye base,
A synonym for foulness and disgrace.
Why speak of this ? To mark with trenchant skill,
That "coward of uncommon baseness," still
(Forgive me, Tilton, if I quote from thee ;
Thy cause requires no thankless aid from me,
Patience ! and prove, what time must render plain,
Truth tries strong spirits in the fire of pain,)
Untaught his sacred calling to exempt
From public scorn, yet bids for fresh contempt,
And mouths, to feed the fashion of the hour,
His priestly sanction of unhallowed power.

Columbia ! Name whose spell of sacred worth
Hath been and is the crowning meed of earth ;
The home of Freedom and the shrine of Truth ;
That bright ideal, which in thoughtful youth,
I strove to echo with faint tones of song,
Till in the tumult of the jostling throng
My voice was lost ; yet still I hoped some bard,
With touch of power, would wake thy lyric cord,

And breathe that flame which kindled in one breast,
 In waves of song would flash through all the rest.
 Still sleeps that spirit? Shall heroic shades
 Chant godlike dirges in thy sounding glades,
 And none interpret so that all may hear?
 Shall soulless Fraud usurp this chosen sphere,
 For ages kept, till tyrant power outgrown,
 Should leave mankind a realm without a throne?
 Still sleeps that spirit? Shall the hosts of Wrong
 Unchallenged wreak the mandates of the Strong?
 Is there no voice? Shall dark Corruption snare
 With webs of Law the slumbering Samson's hair,
 And none be found to rouse him from his sleep?
 Shall ruling Faction still resolve to keep
 By force or fraud the transient lease of power,
 Nor deign to think of Retribution's hour?

Is there no champion of the Sons of Song
 To rise in anger and rebuke the wrong?
 No Minstrel-prince that demon power to thrall
 Which rules the madness of this frenzied Saul?
 Shall rampant Power, with lust of gore imbued,
 Revive the memory of each outworn feud,
 Stride, giant-like, o'er fields of patriot dead,
 And shake the land beneath its conquering tread?
 While serried squadrons harness for the fray
 Their victor champion, boastful of the day,
 Let me, like David, then the task assume!
 My sling may wreak this huge Goliath's doom;
 Though all unarmored I have sought the field,
 No polished weapon in my hand I wield;
 Unknown, and single from the cowering throng,
 Who bear unchecked the insults of the strong,
 Let my unpracticed hand and arm of youth
 Smite giant, Falsehood with the stone of Truth.

Unsceptered realm ! where, built with boundless care,
 God's hand hath reared a world's great House of Prayer ;
 Whose broad foundations, based in ocean's roar,
 And rock-paved porches, sweep from shore to shore ;
 Whose cloud capped walls and mountain pillars rise,
 O'er roofed with splendor of the sapphire skies ;
 Whose altar shrines are flashed with crystal spars,
 Crimson and gold, and gems of clustering stars ;
 World of the West ! whose wide expanded gates
 Unclose a clime where boundless blessing waits ;
 On whose broad bosom and maternal breast
 The gathered nations find a welcome rest ;
 Not one, but many—many linked in one ;
 Fair Freedom's stars encircling Freedom's sun ;
 A peaceful brotherhood of sovereign States ;
 'Tis thus that God his shining worlds creates ;
 'Tis thus her stars on Freedom's banner glow ;
 What fitter emblem could Columbia show ?

In this broad land, where, from his mountain height,
 The eagle soars in heaven's unclouded light,
 Where, since that beam first on his vision shone,
 Far as his glance can pierce it sees no throne,—
 What sudden tumult shakes the startled air,
 With roll of drum and pealing trumpets blare ?
 Through yonder plumes and ranks of glittering spears,
 What monarch form in royal pomp appears ?
 What laureled lustre from his brow is shed,
 Who thus presumes a Conqueror's path to tread ?
 Come, Truth ! and with what slender skill we can,
 Rehearse the progress of the Coming Man.

Swept on the surge of fierce fraternal strife,
 Which late engulfed a struggling people's life,
 Unmindful of the mangled wrecks around,
 So that for him the grist, success, was ground,—

Upborne by fortune to promotion's sphere,
 Victor, then ruler, now behold him here.
 Men mutely gaze and marvel at the sight,
 Or ask, How gained he such a lofty height?
 Without one trait which nobler natures share,
 How comes he throned in sullen grandeur there?
 Such do not read the page of power aright;
 'Tis not a meed of worth, 'tis one of might.
 There is a force chief factor of success,
 Great souls may lack and meaner ones possess;
 A gift supreme in fickle Fortune's dower;
 The gitt to wait the all-potential hour;
 Then, when the tide sweeps on with sounding sway,
 Launch forth the bark that bears the prize away!
 Through densest barriers Nature's hand can weave,
 Repeated strokes at length a path will cleave;
 When all is wrought that art and strength can do,
 What sovereign fool may not ride safely through?
 There comes a moment when the battered wall,
 O'erborne, beneath a final touch will fall;
 When years of war exhaust a people's power,
 The pimp of Fortune claims the victor's dower.
 When fierier souls, too zealous in the strife,
 Had sunk in death, or bore a mangled life;
 When worthier chiefs, by factious power undone,
 Had from the arena vanished one by one.
 When sated War, too hugely glut with death,
 Held for an hour its fiercely panting breath;
 When face to face the shattered armies lay,
 Close drawn at last, the weaker foe at bay,—
 Then was his hour! “The Bulldog!” was the cry;
 He came, and saw—then fell his cold reply:
 “I must have men!” Remember, righteous Heaven,
 The generous crime—the men were freely given.
 For what? To bridge that long be-vaunted ditch,
 The last! to him a trifling matter which,—

Whose fruitful soil, well cultured to its bloom,
Hath grown this harvest of a hero's boom.

Could that untombed and fleshless host arise,
What awful menace in their ghostly eyes
Would greet this semblance of a tyrant's feast,
To know they bled for such a soulless beast ;
And wake the dread of what till now has slept,
Dark retribution for their woes unwept.
How could they think the cause for which they died
Would make this mimic of despotic pride,
Raised by success to such imperial height,
Their country's mockery and her freedom's blight ?
Would they not wreathe, with stern disdainful glance,
The chieftain's car, or weaved in mystic dance,
Chant by his side, with cold and shuddering hiss,
In spectral tones such mocking strain as this ?

Lo, the Hero of Hate on his conquering car !
Dark monarch of slaughter, fierce Moloch of war ;
Stolid, insatiable, tyrannous, grim,
Let the curse of our scorn be his welcoming hymn.

We are covered from grief, we are shadowed from power,
And we shadow the chief in his conquering hour.

When the whirlwind of war was a tempest of hell,
There were few that escaped, there were many who fell ;
How we pitied that few, how we pity them yet,
For the seal of his power on the living is set.

We are covered from grief, we are shadowed from power,
And we mock at the chief in his conquering hour.

In our Bivouac Doom, in our Field of the Dead,
We are foemen no longer—our passion is sped ;
We have mingled as brothers, who challenged as foes,
And the clasp of our kindred no feud can unclose.

We are covered from grief, we are shadowed from power,
And we scoff at the chief in his triumphing hour.

He had left us in peace, and our slumbers were light,
 For his country was freed from his tyrannous blight ;
 He returns with his thunders our bosoms to rack,
 And we summon our squadrons to shadow his track.

We are covered from grief, we are shadowed from power,
 And we shadow the chief in his triumphing hour.

We shadow the blaze of his conquering car,
 Fierce Moloch of slaughter, dark monarch of war ;
 Gloomy, remorseless, inscrutable, grim,
 Let it never be said that we battled for him.

We are covered from grief, we are shadowed from power,
 Let his triumph be brief—it will pass with the hour !

Enough of this !—too ghastly is the theme,
 Even though we know 'tis but a spectral dream ;
 Those patriot souls—I name not some, but all,
 Whose lives were given at their country's call,
 Sleep in the shadow of a stronger Power,
 To hail with joy a more triumphal hour.
 Not ours to recognize the mingled plan ;
 Wait, and in love the perfect purpose scan ;
 The love which mourns such darkly wasted life,
 Shall heal the wounds of fierce fraternal strife.

Here stay awhile—the monarch form demands
 A finished portrait from our faithful hands.
 Hands, not unskilled in hues of living light
 To clothe each image shadowed to the sight ;
 Or, lit by beams of truth's celestial ray,
 To wreath the page illumined by nature's sway,
 From fraud and falsehood sternly held aloof,
 Find here the task that puts their powers to proof ;
 Receive it, then, with truthful semblance rife,
 Though rudely drawn, the traits are all from life.

Inert, impassive as the stony Sphinx,
 Whose constant scowl declares that still he thinks,
 Nor thinks in vain, as each close-ordered phrase,
 Curt, keen, incisive, from his lips betrays ;
 Sordid alike in glory as in shame,
 And all unconscious of the patriot's flame,
 Who never spoke nor penned a generous thought
 Of fealty to the cause for which he wrought ;
 Of soul unfeeling as in guise austere,
 Unmoved by ardor and unswayed by fear ;
 Whom fate accords, what seems his fitting due
 A boundless lordship o'er a servile crew.—
 What potent fiend inspires that daring dream,
 The despot wish o'er all to reign supreme ?
 Ambition, meaner vice of gifted minds,
 In that cold guise a fit exemplar finds,
 A brain well skilled in all her subtle arts,
 The craft, without the worth of nobler parts.

Behold him seated in the People's Chair !
 We sure shall find some gleams of lustre there :
 Exalted by a grateful country's voice,
 He needs must seek to justify the choice ;
 The man at least, is human ; let him find
 Fit instruments to aid his fettered mind,
 Whose fixed integrity shall wisely share
 The gift of power intrusted to his care.
 Still rules undimmed that same malignant star !
 In peace as doltish as unmoved in war ;
 The same dark egotist, who fathoms still
 No higher thought than his unquestioned will.
 Dare you presume his lightest wish to thwart ?
 Expect his hatred's unremorseful art.
 Slow, secret, sure, it finds the fitting hour,
 And manhood quails beneath its withering power !

Would you escape his unrelenting wrath ?
 Crouch, fawning, hound-like in the master's path.
 With power to make himself revered of all,
 His chiefest joy his former comrade's fall.
 With means each selfish mandate to fulfill,
 And shall this tyrant want the power to kill ?
 Go ! read his fate, that high heroic soul,
 Who fell beneath the despot's dark control ;
 Who,, foremost still bright Honor's wreath to claim,
 Shone meteor-like amid the battle flame ;
 Whose martial form, beneath the warcloud dun,
 Led many a gallant charge, and lost not one ;
 Whose battle trophies would outnumber far
 The hero's throned on yon triumphal car ;
 Whose dauntless arm, and soul devoid of fear,
 Did much to lift him to that lofty sphere ;
 Who dared, unswayed by sycophantic awe,
 Obey the mandate of his country's law,
 And spoke what proved—expunge it thou who wilt !
 The chief's connivance with his hireling's guilt !
 Disgraced, dishonored in his country's ranks,
 Read here the hero's and the patriot's thanks !
 See then that soldier, burning with the stain,
 Seek desperate death upon the battle plain ;
 Fall, girt with waves of circling savage strife—
 A fitting finale for his fearless life.

Long shall thy deeds thy country's memory share,
 O dauntless chieftain of the shining hair !
 Long, high enshrined upon her scroll of fame,
 Resplendent shine the gallant Custer's name !
 While *his* who wrought thy sad yet glorious fate,
 Thy country's heart shall darkly execrate.

Let none attribute to my truthful page
 Vindictive malice or detractive rage.

No claim have I to sanction or achieve,
 No failing cause to succor or retrieve.
 Reluctant Truth would fain the theme forego,
 But Justice bids the shameful history show.
 See ! rampant Fraud's intrepid Matador
 Transfixed by Power and weltering in his gore !
 Fearless I flaunt the crimson tale abroad,
 And flout the foe his servile pimps applaud.
 Under a cloud ! his enemies proclaim ;
 The only cloud that covers Custer's name,
 Is that which generous souls must always bear,
 By duty called a despot's wrath to dare.
 Not all the might of Mississippi's wave,
 Though steeped for ages in its liquid grave,
 Could from *his* carcase wash the damning shame,
 While language lives the record to proclaim !

What ! this a Cæsar ? No ! the Roman's soul
 Could never feel revenge's dark control ;
 And even when treason dared his life to spill,
 Great Cæsar's spirit loved his Brutus still.
 But this, who ne'er save serf or menial loved,
 A tyrant Brutus to his comrade proved.

This a Napoleon ? No ! that soul of power,
 Which flamed so fiercely in its sovereign hour,
 Who crowned his legions with victorious spoil,
 Still shared alike their dangers and their toil ;
 Still spoke betimes the sympathetic word,
 Which like a trump their martial spirits stirred ;
 Yes ! history tells, where frozen thousands slept
 On Russia's plains, the haughty soldier wept ;
 Gazed with remorse upon the corse-strewn track,
 Cried, " Give, O Storm ! my buried legions back ! "
 Well might he weep such wasted life to see ;
 But thou, what tear of pity flowed from thee,
 Above the fields where slaughtered thousands lie ?
 No—" Give me men !" was still thy soulless cry.

Yes ; probe, search, question that remorseless heart ;
 Explore his breast with psycologic art ;
 Rehearse his record since that fatal day.
 He reeled to sight at Pittsburg Landing's fray ;
 Let Donaldson present its plea anew ;
 Let Vicksburg siege unfold its chart to view ;
 Let that dark Wilderness of ghastly death
 Exhale once more its pestilential breath ;
 Let Petersburg her massed and mangled dead
 In shattered heaps before the gaze outspread ;
 These were his countrymen, his kindred, all ;
 Name me the hour his sullen eye let fall
 For these, for all, the silent trickling tear
 Stern warriors shed even o'er a foeman's bier ;
 Name me the hour when from his lips there fell
 For one, for all, a whispered, sad farewell.

Without a spark of that immortal ray
 Which fired the monarchs of a former day ;
 Which gave to Cæsar, spite ambition's shame,
 The shining lustre of a deathless name ;
 Which made Napoleon, in his conquering pride,
 If such *could* be, a godlike homicide,
 And gave him, prisoned on his lonely isle,
 A soldier's meed, his country's love the while ;
 This soulless dolt, by fortune's aid alone,
 Has made a land the footstool of his throne,
 And bridged by countless slaughtered countrymen,
 A skull-paved causeway to his despot's den.

Waste not your wrath upon the man alone ;
 Who does not see the power around the throne,
 Leagued, link by link, his central sway confess,
 Because, in truth, he represents them best ?
 The sordid champion of a base pretense,
 "By merit raised to that bad eminence."

Chief of that vile conspiracy whose shame
 Makes *him* the centre of its monstrous claim.
 If it be true, as these his menials prate,
 A sovereign hand should hold the rod of State,
 Else would the severed orbs disordered fly,
 And, comet-like, flame lawless through the sky,
 Then find a *man* to rule us, but not this,—
 This beast from out the bottomless abyss
 Of factious fury and tyrannic hate,
 This dark embodiment of forceful fate !
 Fit symbol of the Juggernaut of war,
 Enthroned by Faction on his conquering car,
 While serfs and menials own his silent nod—
 Immortal Hatred's mortal beast-like god !
 Out on the sham ! let Freedom's voice declare
 Fit condemnation of its guilty glare.
 Out on the fraud ! let freemen's loud acclaim
 Speak swift reversal of its monstrous shame.

What flaming planet ruled the fatal day
 When thou wert fashioned into soulless clay ?
 What deep malignance, passionless and cold,
 Could in thy form such sordid force enfold ?
 Saturn ? or Mars ? Not, surely, Mars ; for he,
 Fierce warrior-god, is still from baseness free ;
 Besides, he scorns each groveling satellite,
 And bids them keep well hidden from his sight.
 Saturn might well the fateful spell fulfill,
 Whose baleful presence works unmixed ill ;
 Saturn might well such evil potency fling,
 Himself the centre of a monstrous Ring !

Think not the artist fears his work to own,
 Who trusts the canvas to its worth alone ;
 Your color blender does not scrawl below—
 This is a portrait—Mr. So-and-so.

Unless his piece some graphic power displays,
 Why then obtrude it on the public gaze ?
 Yet, since our present prose belabored time
 Is little used to finding truth in rhyme,
 Know, to forestall each captious critic's cant,
 This is Ulysses Hiram Simpson Grant.

Since favor gave—what merit ne'er had won—
 The beggar's steed which bears him proudly on ;
 Since Fortune waits, still constant at his side,
 To point the path his reckless feet shall ride ;
 Speed, speed ! we know thy fore-appointed race,
 Yet tire of watching such a lengthened chase ;
 On to thy goal, and prove the proverb true,
 When beggars ride the devil gets his due.

He goes at last, from toils of State released,
 From menials' fawning and from flatterers' feast,
 Enriched with spoil from Freedom's altar torn,
 And party gifts, well earned and proudly worn ;
 He goes to find upon a foreign shore,
 Fit fields (for him) to conquer or explore.
 Speed, honored bark, o'er ocean's bounding breast,
 To distant realms, each grateful sovereign's guest. .
 Doubt not a fitting welcome thou shalt find ;
 A fellow feeling makes even despots kind.
 Thy tongue well tutored from each foreign throne,
 Shall add at length new meanings to its tone ;
 Its tone ! In vain would foreign linguist teach
 The man who ne'er hath learned his native speech.
 It matters not, each sovereign's awful nod
 Will still proclaim the fellow demigod ;
 While wondering menials marvel at the man
 Who speaks so little, yet whene'er he can ;
 Till thou return, in more than regal state,
 Columbia's sovereign silent potentate.

What ! shall the Old World still outshine the New ?
 Shall outworn realms our youthful clime outdo ?
 Shall mother England boast her costly dower
 Of princely dolts and titled sons of power,
 Whose prestige thrives by foul oppression's gain,
 And feasts and fattens on the bondman's pain ?
 Since thus her arm the thunderbolt can wield,
 Shall she not take what others needs must yield,
 Crush out the life from toiling serfs at home,
 Then wisely seek through fresher fields to roam ?
 See ! girt with power, yon foully ravaged isle,
 By nature clothed with verdure's fairest smile,
 Robbed, scourged and plundered, while her famished brood
 In mud-paved hovels die for lack of food.
 Are these the proofs of their imperial sway ?
 The savage beast is more humane than they !
 Know, bloody tyrant, that thy hour will come ;
 Though round the world is heard thy circling drum,
 Thy pomp, thy power, shall crumble in a day,
 And men shall wonder at thy vanished sway.
 But hold—though charged with many a beastly wrong,
 England is not the burden of our song.

Shall dark Italia show her sacred dome,
 The spectral shadow of imperial Rome,
 Whose vanished pomp and outward splendor flown,
 Now leaves her power to torture ghosts alone ?
 What though no human bonfire lights her sky ?
 The heretic at all events must die.
 'Tis something still its passage to control,
 And turn the key upon the parted soul ;
 Then, all unlawful exit to prevent,
 A burial case of solid, strong cement !
 'Tis yet some compensation to inspire
 Relentless feuds in people prone to ire,
 Who might, by generous brotherly accord,
 Redeem their land from proud oppression's sword.

Yes ! 'tis some consolation to declare
 Her people slaves, though born in Freedom's air,
 And weave her snares with Superstition's art,
 To bind the judgment but not wake the heart.

Shall still each separate European state
 Uphold with pride its petty Potentate ?
 Save only France, whose people, strange to say,
 Live, breathe, and thrive without a monarch's sway.
 They tried the mightiest that the world can claim,
 Who cost the rest a deal of work to tame,
 And found him wanting—peace to him the while—
 His lonely grave on St. Helena's isle
 Might teach the rest—even *this*, could he but learn,
 How vain the wreath a conqueror's sword can earn.

Shall Germany, the home of Modern Thought,
 Claim two such names, with royal lustre fraught,
 And *one*, no king, whose single soul alone
 Can boast more power than theirs, both sire and son ?
 "The Man of Blood and Iron," name well earned,
 Whose word proud France's last usurper spurned—
 Sent him to find "my uncle's" fate of yore,
 An exile's grave upon a foreign shore.
 'Twere well if thus the record still might be,
 That each might aid to set the nations free ;
 Like drunken thieves that o'er their plunder gloat,
 'Twere well if each could cut the other's throat.

Shall Russia boast her cold, despotic Czar,
 Beloved by serfs as all such monarchs are ?
 How much they love him has been proved of late,
 Or if not love the proof is no less great.
 That love, 'twould seem, has grown to such increase,
 They scarce will leave him to his meals in peace ;
 O strong devotion, whose dynamic power
 Invades the palace at the banquet hour,

Provides that feast a despot's choicest food,
 His subjects' flesh and rich ambrosial blood !
 Yes, that rough home of Peter called the Great,
 Grows quite too warm for Autocrats of late ;
 That clime, long bound by wintry fetters strong,
 Glows fierce with hatred of despotic wrong ;
 And Freedom's breath, suppressed through years of shame,
 Speaks forth its vengeance with a voice of flame.

Shall Asia own her sovereigns, at whose frown
 The faithful subject rips his entrails down,
 To save his lord the trouble, and shall we
 Have naught but men ? A monarch let him be !
 If but to show what fools we freemen are ;
 How mean a thing can wear a conqueror's star ;
 Confirm the vaunt that despots long have made,
 To rule the mob is still the monarch's trade.

Lo, lordless yet—though strangely wooed of late,
 Columbia, tireless, weaves her web of State ;
 Contriving oft the fabric to undo,
 Which still requires fresh labor to renew ;
 A respite thus from tyrant power to earn,
 Till fate decree her rightful lord's return ;
 Who is that lord ? Ulysses ! Who but he
 From constant toil her faithful hands can free ?
 Who from her frame, unfit such toil to bear,
 Shall lift at once the burden of her care ?
 He comes at last, that mission to fulfill ;
 He comes, a menial, save his monarch will ;
 Might that prevail, then every inch a king !
 Whose hand like his the party quoit can ring ?
 Whose arm the bow of sovereign power shall bend,
 And to its mark the shaft of empire send ?
 Howe'er disguised, with tinsel or with clout,
 The dogs of office soon shall scent him out ;

Soon recognize unchanged the despot tone,
And by their fawning make the master known.

Ye varlets ! now your wonted tricks resume ;
Your master speaks—the cause demands a boom !
Ye politicians ! skilled in party toils ;
Ye office mongers ! hungry for the spoils ;
Ye thieving ringsters ! now too long outlawed
From posts of profit and from schemes of fraud ;
(But hold—not now—that all prevailing word
In louder tones perchance shall yet be heard ;)
Ye whippers-in ! who wield the party lash ;
Ye would-be judges ! who dispense the cash ;
Ye corporations, soulless as your king,
Like cleaves to like, ye recognize the thing ;
Ye shylocks ! late so joyful to resume,
Down with the stamps,—the cause demands a boom !
Ye minions ! ready at the beck of power,
To sound the plaudits of your chieftain's hour ;
Ye puppets ! eager for the big parade,
The long drawn march, the glittering cavalcade,
Ye henchmen of the gleaming casque and plume,
Come, swell the train—the cause demands a boom !
Ye shysters ! itching for a chance to spout,
And poor your floods of fulsome rhetoric out ;
Ye hireling clergy ! watchful still to find
A Coming Man well moulded to your mind,
Prate, fawn and flatter, and insult your God
With incense offered to this speechless fraud !
Ye gourmands ! scentful of the promised feast,
Your adulation is sincere at least ;
Your costly entrance to the banquet room
Shall be repaid—the cause demands a boom !

'Tis past ! the hero's long victorious march,
The pageantry, the high triumphal arch,

The big parade, the crowds from toil releas'd,
The fulsome rhetoric, and the brimming feast.
What waits the monarch's mandate to fulfill ?
One thing alone—the people's sovereign will !
The people ! yes, howe'er the tricksters fret,
Some things the people do not quite forget ;
The knaves, the thieves, a former lease of power
Upheld and fostered till its final hour ;
What servile minions of fraternal strife
Were gorged and fattened on the country's life ;
Who parceled for each cunning varlet's dower
The country's gift, the sacred trust of power ;
Who basely branded at a felon's word
Her bravest son that ever flashed a sword ;
Whose heel of power was on the prostrate South ;
What minion dared that foul insult to mouth,
Whose hoarse response and deep-toned blood-hound bay
Yet haunts him, though a " thousand miles away ; "
What word ? " Banditti ! " Southern gentlemen,
Ye heard it once, have ye forgotten when ?
That stern arraignment of perverted power,
From lips that labored till their latest hour
In freedom's cause, which pirate statesmen heard,
And quailed to see the Sumner lion stirred !
Who signed himself a hundred thousand more,
(Not *men*, but dollars, for his foreign tour ;)
What sovereign word ordained the damning fraud,
Whose brazen front still flaunts its shame abroad ;
All this they know, and keep the record well.
How well, how true, the coming hour will tell.
Remember ? Yes, the time shall come again,
When this imperial soul will want more men ;
If they respond, this adage well may rule,
Each man at best is either knave or fool.

What ! boomsters, ringsters, henchmen, vanished all ?
 Were ye but puppets conjured at his call ?
 Breathes there not one supremely bold, to say,
 I stick for him, first, last, and every day ?
 Yes, one ; behold him ! Keystone's honored son ;
 Whose post of power and prestige proudly won,
 Proves Scotia's shore—a truth ignored till late,
 A goodly soil from which to emigrate ;
 Whose stock, transplanted to this generous sphere,
 Has hugely grown and broadly burgeoned here.
 Beneath the shadow of that parent tree
 What party clansman has not bowed the knee ?
 Full deep instructed in each party wile,
 And wisely schooled in hospitable guile,
 He kens too well the tale of Roderick Dhu,
 To let this chieftain pass unguarded through.
 O, degradation of a clansman's name !
 O, honor bartered for a hireling's fame !
 O, base devotion to a loftier crest !
 But hold—this chieftain knows his business best ;
 Wait till the ford, the Keystone ford, is past ;
 Perhaps we'll find them man to man at last ;
 In vain ! the clansman rashly throws away
 His target shield too early in the fray ;
 In vain ! disarmed beneath the royal heel,
 No party dirk shall foil his foeman's steel.

Thou, fitting champion of a cause like this,
 Whose reason scorns a mightier Power than his,
 Orator Bob ! whose dulcet accents glide,
 Like murmuring streams that through the meadows slide,
 Nor ask what feeds their living currents' flow,
 Nor whence they come, nor whitherto they go.
 Whose wealth of verse-like prose, or prose-like verse,
Might still be better, and *could* still be worse.

Would it were prose ; strong, trenchant, truthful, bold ;
 Then we might say, " This, surely, is not old." "
 Would it were verse, well rhymed and fitly turned,
 Then we might point the page from which 'twas learned.
 Speak ! Bob, whenever you can hire a hall ;
 'Twill do you good, and sure no harm can fall.
 Your logic, spite of theologic foes,
 Shall win the day—so far as logic goes ;
 Dissolve great Berkley's world-dissolving mist—
 Creative Thought's bombastic Nihilist !
 Great self-constructed Cognitive Machine !
 Deny the Essence, deify the seen ;
 Discard alike the human—cosmic Soul ;
 Dig Being's grave—Negation's rimless hole ;
 Prove, past all doubt, thyself a sentient clod,
 The world a cheat, and life a juggler's fraud,
 Whose psychal cypher serves but to express
 Creation's void—the sum of nothingness !
 But, my advice—I give it gratis, Bob—
 If you would rouse the soul's electric throb
 When you depict Columbia's Volunteer,
 Don't copy from the Bounty Mutineer ;
Don't make him just like Byron's British Tar,
 Who fights for sport, and makes a jest of war ;
 " Careless of danger as the onward wind "—
 Who seeks the rest may at his leisure find
 Each chosen phrase, well pruned and deftly scanned,
 Pressed, cut and dry, for Bob's creative hand.

Chicago ! Mistress of the midland seas,
 Or inland oceans—call them what you please ;
 Hermaphoditus of the flood and flame,
 By both usurped, which neither quite can claim ;
 Chicago ! famed for Communistic bores,
 Combustious streets, and cloud-aspiring stores ;

Stores deeply freighted with the fruetuous spoil
 From Grangers wrung by speculative toil.
 What Manitou pronounced the mingled spell
 Thy fateful history has fulfilled so well ?
 What Mudjekeewis, with tempestuous breath,
 Still seeks to sweep thee with a fiery swath ?
 What Hiawatha from the Big Sea wave
 Returns to gulf thee in a liquid grave ?
 What Retribution for a slaughtered race,
 Concentering here, completes a land's disgrace ?
 Chicago ! watchful for the promised day,
 To feast the bilks, and make the gudgeons pay ;
 Who saw convened, regardless of expense,
 Cracks, prigs, pickpockets, cunning rogues of fence—
 A host of thieves ! responsive to their king,
 To fleece the crowds thy hundred trains should bring.
 'Twas thine, expectant of the monster Boom,
 To see it vanish in a sea of gloom ;
 'Twas thine, exultant in thy boastful claim,
 To see it fade, a feeble, flickering flame ;
 Millions of stars illum'd the murky way !
 Millions of stars could not restore the day.
 What jammed the boom and balked the big parade ?
 'Twas simply this : The boomsters could not wade.
 What spoiled the show and made the prigs so grum ?
 'Twas simply this : The Grangers did not come.
 Chicago ! yet some crumbs of comfort fell ;
 Let Fame preserve and guard the relics well.
 'Twas thine to hear, responsive to thine own,
 Flashed from the Toombs, a fierce defiant groan !
 To hear rechimed the Keystone patriot's chant,
 " World-girdling " buncombe—sycophantic cant ;
 'Twas thine to hear the Master soul of Boom
 Read—what he could not speak—his country's doom.
 'Twas thine to hear the proud usurping claim,
 I bear the sword in the REPUBLIC's name ;

To hear him mouth that monstrous guarantee,
I shall preserve what *I* have rendered free !
 Where was thy lightning, Freedom ? Where the flame
 Which made a desert of those streets of shame ?
 Who framed that utterance ? Who inspired that strain ?
 That Ring who hope through him to wreath her chain ?
 That Chief whose widely devastating march
 Out-capped the keystone of this conqueror's arch ?
 A march unmatched for dire destructive rage,—
 The boast of song in this enlightened age !
 A march which left no barrier in its course,
 Burnt, razed, and ravaged with remorseless force ;
 Whose trail of blight and blackness long shall be
 The damning record *how* he reached the sea !
 Great brother conqueror ! whose unselfish flame
 Sheds added luster to his colder claim ;
 Unmarred by petty rivalries of power,
 How blest with love in this fraternal hour !
 Yet, brother chief ! 'twere well to have a care ;
 This all-absorbing sovereign soul will bear
 No rival claimant of his vested right ;
 True, thou may'st prompt ; nay more, may even indite
 The royal bond,—such aid is not amiss ;
 Who wrote such history well may father this !

What knows that dolt of nation or of State ?
 What taught “REPUBLIC” to his lips so late ?
 REPUBLIC ! yes, that smacks of ancient Rome—
 We know the end, the Cæsars' stately dome.
 Name what Republic has not had its crown
 Usurped by hands ignoble as his own.
 Israel ? She had her monarch madman Saul ;
 Greece ? Alexander, maddest far of all ;
 The crown for which great Cæsar bled in vain,
 Octavious grasped and wore without a stain ;

France? Yes, her monarch was ambition mad,
 Sought more, and lost the royal boon he had ;
 See ! how the record of the past will stand ;
 "Gloomy" enough, though little of the "grand,"
 And quite "peculiar"—ha ! no pilfering there—
 Let 'Frisco scribes that dark discovery share.
 Pierce through that brain with deep dissective gaze,
 Rehearse what traits the sovereign's eye displays,
 And gravely hint of friends not over wise ;
 If this be so, then all opprobrium dies ;
 Whom God hath touched let not his fellows scorn !
 Yet Wisdom speaks, of dark experience born,
 "These be the madmen who have made men mad,
 Conquerors and kings"—a tale how deeply sad !
 'Tis ours to see that none, or mad or sane,
 Repeat the daring tragedy again.
 Meanwhile this question for solution waits :
 What has became of these UNITED STATES ?
 Was CONSTITUTION then engulfed by War ?
 Is President another name for Czar ?
 Is then the Sword the power to which we owe
 Supreme allegiance ? Answer ! and if so,
 Then let us say, Yon tomb, where darkly sleeps
 That rugged form, in vain its treasure keeps ;
 In vain his country rears above his bones
 Her sacred pile of monumental stones ;
 Then it was TRUE ! Brave Brutus, breathe again !
 "He slew his country and was justly slain."

Know, cold Usurper, there was one who saw
 That proud assumption in the name of Law ;
 One who, unmoved by Power's enchanting spell,
 Interpreted its daring meaning well ;
 Who, though unknown beyond his scenes of birth,
 And there perchance esteemed of little worth,
 Had watched the growth of this tyrannic power
 From its first dawning till its present hour ;

Who saw it lurking in the deep abyss
 Of public crime—who heard its dragon hiss
 When first it rose upon the surge of strife,—
 Beheld it fasten on the people's life
 When that wild storm of passion passed away,—
 Who saw and knew that it had come to stay !
 Who never sought, nor seeks not now to claim
 The thankless prestige of a prophet's name,
 Yet who, e'er first you left your native shore,
 Rehearsed your progress with foreshadowing lore ;
 Saw, traced in symbols as a pen of flame,
 Thy course, thy coming, and its final aim.
 Who, skilled in mysteries of thy craft, could say
 Where would emerge thy darkened eastward way ;
 Who saw its deep significance of power
 Unfolded in the utterance of that hour.

Words are but words ; 'twas fit thou should'st abuse
 That potent weapon freemen dare not use.
 I, too, with words can weave a hidden spell ;
 'Twere well that all should heed its meaning well ;
 Say, This is Rome, the new-born Italy ;
 Sovereign, supreme, all-conquering, crownless, free ;
 Unsceptered still ! let no base Cassius say
 Our Roman birthright yet has passed away.
 We had our twin-born Saxon founders, who
 From savage veins their native fierceness drew ;
 Our Romulus, who, when his brother leapt
 The Atlantic bar, in gore his weapon steept ;
 We had our Cincinnatus, long ago ;
 So long, we tire to hear him vaunted so ;
 He served his land—her debt of service paid,
 He sought with dignity retirement's shade ;
 He loved his country, but her sons were men,
 And CONSTITUTION was her safeguard then !

We had our Cæsar—Rome's next honored son ;
 Dark was the hour he crossed the Rubicon !
 Fierce was the flood, he braved its swelling power,
 And rose the daring monarch of the hour.
 'Twas he first taught the modern tyrant school,
 "They only can be free who dare to rule."
 We had our Pompey, in whose shadow lay
 Great Cæsar's form, and breathed his life away.
 What Pompey ? *That* let dark Oppression tell,
 For whose revenge the mighty Cæsar fell ;
 The power that chained our Afric Hannibal,
 Shrined by our fathers in the Capital ;
 'Twas meet, to make the parallel complete,
 Cæsar should fall at vanquished Thraldom's feet.
 Then, since we claim our martyr Cæsar dead,
 Shall not Augustus wear the crown instead ?
 Augustus, hail !—but Brutus—where is he ?
 And first we'll hear the noble Antony :
 I am no orator as Brutus is,
 I cannot thunder with a voice like his,
 Nor hurl, with awful vengeance in mine eye,
 The tragic doom, Thou ! Tyrant-traitor, die !
 Yet know, I loved this murdered Cæsar well,
 And wept the hour the generous tyrant fell !
 That Roman soul of strong heroic mould,
 By lofty thought and fearless power controlled ;
 His grasp was on his country, but his heart
 Beat strong with love for all and every part.
 I watched him hold the shattered helm of State,
 Though bent and broken by the billows' weight,
 Through storms of war, till shone the beams of peace ;
 Then saw and mourned that gallant purpose cease,
 And Faction, rampant in the name of Law,
 Work out the doom his prophet soul foresaw.
 His Epitaph—'tis here, and quickly scanned ;
 You read, we know—perhaps you'll understand ;

"Sincere in purpose and of lofty soul,
 Unswayed by factious hatred's fell control,
 He bore the burden of a troubled State
 That might have crushed an Atlas by its weight.
 Alas, that purpose so devoutly strong
 Should reach its end by ways so darkly wrong !
 Thy tribute paid, great Cæsar, sleep in peace ;
 Thy Brutus' soul found fitly swift release ;
 Perhaps he loves thee on that Stygian shore
 Where tyrants fall and Brutus smites no more."
 Augustus—hear ; a private word with you ;
 We'll halve the world—'tis large enough for two ;
 Our compact made had need be thus exprest :
 I'll keep the People—you may claim the rest.

Behold the man who left his native shore—
 For what ? To find what name his country bore !
 This traveled Sinbad of a three years cruise,
 Comes, hugely fraught with—Lilliputian news !
 We live much better—take it man for man—
 In the REPUBLIC than in Hindustan !
 Why not ? The world is large enough for all ;
 Men need not herd like beasts in one wide stall.
 What makes that swarming hive of human bees
 Exist—not live—to die by slow degrees ?
 'Tis proud Oppression, whose remorseless will,
 Makes blinded millions grind its prison mill !
 Speed swift the hour—not only here, but there,
 Mankind alike the fruits of toil shall share.

'Tis "distance lends enchantment to the view,"
 And so, 'twould seem, has distance done for you.
 You learned so much while on a foreign shore,
 You should go back, and learn a trifle more !
 Go ! studious soul ; and when you go again,
 Instruct your teachers,—make the matter plain,
 And show them thus our status to express :
 Big N—A—T—I—O—N—S.

Tutor your tutors ; tell the Tartar Khan,
 Your other friends—the Tycoon of Japan,
 The Flowery Kingdom High Celestial “ coon,”
 Child of the Sun and Brother of the Moon,
 The Bey of Barbary—and all the rest !
 Columbia bears upon her boundless breast
 A hundred Nations, and has room for more ;
 But not one despot breathes upon her shore !
 Quite true—the last—if you were far away ;
 Go ! traveled fraud, and speed the parting day.

Great Cosmos bearer ! ere your tortoise hulk
 Essay this modern world’s stupendous bulk,
 First let your feet a firm foundation find ;
 The time is past when creatures of your kind,
 Self-poised on nothing, could uphold its weight ;
 Your Hindoo lore was learned an age too late.

Ho ! Rip Van Winkle of a Third Term sleep,
 Restored so soon from vile potations deep ?
 ’Twas well enough, the mad Bacchanial hour,
 But not the last—the demon draught of Power ;
 Shadows of Empire ! whose potential sway
 So deeply on his fettered spirit lay ;
 Dark, silent goblins of a gloomy past,
 Your spell departs—the man will speak at last !
 He comes to find his former spouse of Power,
 (Although unwed) a pseudo-claimant’s dower ;
 Strange ! she should know that once familiar tone,
 He knows *her* name, but—can he tell *his own* ?
 What now ? Expect no word of idle rant ;
 Behold the close-conned, deeply-worded Grant !
 No more dispute—that well remembered name,
 That Writ of Grant, decides at once his claim ;
 That Writ of Power proclaims the fact to-day,
 Columbia owns a maudlin vagrant’s sway !

Mark well the claimant of the Final Voice,
 "Columbia, true, may not accord her choice ;
 He cares not—nay, so dear her welfare lies—
 Hopes the necessity may not arise ! "

Is there a climax of absurdity
 In egotism ? That climax this must be.
 What deep significance may lurk below
 I leave his schooled interpreters to show ;
 Yet, lest the rendering all should quite mistake,
 Let me, *en passant*, this slight comment make :
 The story goes, a well known statesman, once,
 (Who, matters not—grant us, he was no dunce,
 Since he could speak—that every school-boy knows,
 Was ne'er denied by either friends or foes.)
 When with his fellow-statesmen called to dine,
 Was, statesman-like, somewhat o'ercome with wine,
 In fact, quite drunk ; when called on for a speech,
 A patriot friend who sat in easy reach,
 And, strange to say, retained his senses yet,
 Suggested as a theme "The Public Debt."
 "The Public Debt," the orator uprears
 His honored form amid applausive cheers,
 "The Public Debt demands the patriot's aid ;
 The Public Debt, it must, it shall be paid ;
 Since no one else has got sufficient pelf,
 By Jove ! I'll pay the Public Debt myself ! "
 He ceased, collapsed, and to the carpet sunk,
 That saddest sight, a patriot statesman drunk.

False power-proclaimer ! thinking but to shake
 Your threatening mane, and all the world will quake,
 Your trick is old—you played it twice before,
 And played it well—but then you did not roar ! .
 We know you now, and tell you without fear,
 Your boastful strategy won't answer here.

It might succeed, if vulgar things like you,
 Lions *en masque*, could learn their nature too.
 No, monstrous cheat ! your ruse will hardly pass ;
 Your tell-tale tongue too well proclaims the Ass.
 Go, doff that hide ! resume your native gait--
 A fool by nature, and a fraud by fate.

Come, tell us now--be honest, if you can--
 If not, why then at least be candid, man--
 Say just whereon you base your regnant claim ?
 Your long career of high devoted aim ?
 Your worth was ne'er discovered till the hour
 Your first commission gained the seal of power.
 Would you not now, except for patron aid,
 Be festering still in vile seclusion's shade ?
 Would you not still be sweltering o'er your vat--
 If it be true you could do even that--
 But for the War? Aye! Tragedy's the thing
 Whereby we catch the conscience of the king !
 Your right of sway is based upon the dead ;
 Your spouse of Power, by bloody rapine wed,
 Still fires your lust of that adulterous joy,
 Still whispers your insatiate soul, Destroy !
 Beware the Ghost ! the Ghost of murdered Right,
 Whose sleepless spirit walks the viewless night,
 Shall find some champion whose devoted soul,
 Unswayed by doubt or craven fear's control,
 Shall dare to heed that tale so darkly strange,
 And roused to fierceness, sweep to its revenge !

Say, man of deeply meditative thought,
 How long before a buried feud will rot ?
 Four years—or eight?—A tanner lasts as long.
 Sixteen?—Say twenty, since the pulse was strong.
 Well, twenty, say ; (we should have stopped at ten.)
 This jester ruled us like a sovereign then.

We youngsters hailed him Monarch of the hour ;
 'Twas quite the thing, his boast of boundless power?
 His scathing jibes—how fierce their lightnings fell !
 His flash of mirth was like the fire of hell !
 How he could set the table in a roar !
 The feast was Death—the cup was human gore !
 This skull, exhumed afresh from day to day,
 Makes (for the stage) a filthy, foul display ;
 Faugh ! bury it—the ghastly, crumbling cell ;
 Ask not how deep, but hide the carcase well.
 Down, down, in dark Plutonian caverns deep.
 Let these vile bones their charneled slumber keep.

Lo, Cuba ! daughter of the dancing Main !
 Who thought to break the power of haughty Spain,
 And would, had proud Columbia deigned her aid,
 The shelter of her Starry Banner's shade.
 He goes—the reason all may understand,
 Lured by the scent of that blood-crimsoned strand,
 The grateful incense of the warrior soul,
 Whose master sway will still his path control
 To fields where carnage feeds on human kind—
 And finds the scenes well suited to his mind.
 But—how ? This daughter of the dancing main,
 Inspired with strength unquelled by haughty Spain,
 Shakes up the hero from his midnight rest,
 Shakes up, and would have shook him from her breast.
 But warned by haughty Neptune, dared not fling
 On his wide realm this carcase of a king.
 Columbia ! learn from this thy future course ;
 Shake off this incubus of fateful force,
 This hybrid offspring of adulterous Mars,
 This fiery dragon trampling Freedom's stars.

Come, view with me—we will not stop at names—
 Our country's, people's, Union's house in flames.

The stately fane by patriot hands upreared,
 To patriot hearts by sacred ties endeared,
 Let patriot hands, unmindful now of spoil,
 Prevent the wreck of Freedom's costly toil.
 Bring forth the Engine, wrought for times like these,
 Quite useless else, a cumbrous, costly piece ;
 Man well the works,—let hands of fearless skill
 Direct the nozzle with determined will ;
 The flames have sunk, the work is well nigh o'er,
 Let fresher strength the liquid current pour ;
 Scorched, bleeding, blasted by the seething fires,
 Each outworn toiler from the task retires ;
 One yet remains, cool, cautious, calm, whose hand
 With prudent reach can yet the wreck command.
 He holds the mouthpiece of the seething flood,
 The stream that quenches is the people's blood !
 Thanks, earnest helpers, for your kind relief ;
 Make, if you choose, yon able hand your chief ;
 Your salvage claims our gratitude decrees,—
 Not occupation of the premises ;
 Our title deed that right still guarantees.

Ye ! boomsters, knaves and sycophants, adieu.
 My song requires no further aid from you ;
 Truth's trumpet voice, however loudly clear,
 Still finds no lodgment in a hireling's ear.
 Ye jackals ! prowling 'neath your master's sway,
 To gnaw the fragments of the promised prey ;
 Ye wolves ! that gorge on Right and Honor slain,
 Back to your haunts—the crisis calls for men !
 Not men who claim for service in the hour
 Of strife, the guerdon of unlicensed power ;
 Not men to feed fierce War's remorseless maw ;
 But men who reverence Constituted Law ;
 And scorn to merge in one despotic will
 The rights adjusted with experienced skill ;

Whose word long banished Justice would restore ;
 Bid her uplift her sacred scale once more,
 And yield alike the citizen, the State,
 The Federal bond, their justly balanced weight ;
 Who "hold the truth to be self-evident,
 All rightful rule is based upon consent ;"
 And view rebellion with a patriot pride,
 Which wars for rights by treasonous power denied.

Ye people ! yet a word before we part ;
 Would I might touch with truth's divinest art,
 That master chord in every honest breast,
 Which, right controlled, shall govern all the rest.
 This is no mockery of an idle theme,
 By fancy chosen—no illusive dream,
 Used to beguile a tedious evening's flight,
 Forgot in slumber ere the morning light ;
 No empty coinage of a scheming brain,
 Inspired by malice or the hope of gain.
 Too vividly before my vision burns
 That tireless wheel at which the toiler earns
 His daily life, this warning to ignore :
 That which shall be is what hath been before.
 If ye mistake the message of the hour,
 Your strength shall feed the dragon folds of Power,
 Which fain would make its final refuge here.
 Do ye not *feel* the conflict drawing near ?
 What ! Have those shining marks of living light
 Our fathers left that we might build aright,
 Proved useless ? Is our Freedom's house of life
 So rent and fractured by fraternal strife—
 Grown such a Babel that each clamorous fool,
 Devoid of skill, demands a master's rule ?
 Must we, to guard the sacred altar stone,
 Now lash the crumbling fabric to a throne ?

Then let the fane come crashing to the earth !
 Far better so than thus uphold its worth ;
 The tie that binds, despite of storm or feud,
 Is this : The bond of sacred brotherhood.
 If this shall fail, farewell to Freedom's claim ;
 Your liberty is but an idle name.
 Then welcome, to the ghastly ruin's height,
 The country's mockery and her freedom's blight.

When Tyrian slaves, uprising in their wrath
 Swept their oppressors from their midnight path,
 All fell save one, whose serf's devoted love
 Could in that hour his secret safeguard prove,
 Who now shall guide their new developed power,
 And stay the rising faction of the hour ?
 'Twas then agreed : Who first beholds the sun
 The coming morn shall be the ruling one.
 Behold them gathered at the dawn of day,
 Each glance expectant of the eastern ray,
 Save *him* who, by his crafty master taught,
 Looked to the west, and claimed the boon he sought ;
 Beheld, reflected from the frowning spire,
 The new-born flash of day's ascending fire.
 When told who taught him thus the morn to greet,
 They bade him call him from his dark retreat,
 And hailed him Monarch—all the rest o'erthrown,
 For many masters they had now but one !
 Is there no warning in the ancient tale ?
 Shall Serfdom still by stratagem prevail ?
 Behold the slaves who crowd this western shore,
 Taught thus to hail the beams of sovereign power,
 Reflected from those towers beyond the sea,
 The bulwarks of an outworn tyranny.

Who has not heard what once the youthful Clay
 Said to his comrade, when their toilsome way

Had reached the Alleghany's crowning crest,
 The boundary then between the East and West,
 As fixed he stood with bared and reverent head :
 "I wait to hear the coming millions' tread !
 Oppressed and exiled from each foreign strand,
 They flow to fill this wide unsceptered land,
 And rear amid the scenes of nature's youth
 The fane of Freedom and the shrine of Truth."

Could Clay, uprisen from his mortal rest,
 Behold outspread his country's boundless breast,
 And see the living tide whose ceaseless roar
 Now fills the continent from shore to shore,
 Might he not ask, in patriotic awe,
 "What power controls, what bond of sacred Law
 Cements this mighty brotherhood of States,
 And heals the feuds that factious strife creates ?"

Then would his guardian spirit hovering near,
 Unfold this message to his wondering ear.
 Patriot ! think not fulfilled thy youthful dream.
 Behold afar yon faint expiring gleam ;
 Hark to yon thunder tone's departing peal,
 Which yet upon thy spirit senses steal.
 These mark the hour when dark Oppression's feud
 Found fierce arbitrament in human blood ;
 These tell the hour when clashing squadrons met,
 And brother's hands with brother's blood were wet.
 'Tis past ; the sulphurous clouds have rolled away,
 But not the Dragon spirit of the fray,
 Which swept the stars from out the shining heaven,
 To mark the path through which its rage was driven !
 Whose demon pomp, and swift unfolding power,
 Still rules the frantic madness of the hour.
 These gathered tribes from every clime of earth,
 Regardless quite of Truth's immortal worth,
 Have reared themselves a shrine of beastly Fraud,
 And blindly bowed before a senseless god ;

A Moloch power, whose red destroying breath
 Breathes fiercely forth the flames of sulphurous death ;
 A Baal monster, whose remorseless greed
 Their strength, their children, and their lives must feed.
 One Voice there was, to which the Power was given,
 Elijah-like, to call the fire from heaven ;
 To light the land with Truth's celestial breath,—
 But what could kindle souls in love with death ?
 That soul, still conscious of the heavenly flame,
 Flashed forth 'gainst falsehood of whatever name ;
 Spoke, prophet-like, to counsel and to warn,—
 The word was met with jeers of blinded scorn.
 O'erborne at last by fierce Oppression's power,
 It fled, and rage and madness ruled the hour,
 But not forever ; still its utterance finds
 A secret judgment deep in faithful minds ;
 And millions wait to hear that voice once more.
 It yet shall speak, and loftier than before :
 In trumpet tones its power shall yet be heard,
 And serfs and despots tremble at the word.
 While blinded dupes and hireling priests of fraud
 In vain invoke their voiceless, senseless god.
 Patriot, ere time completes thy youthful dream,
 Justice must yet each trampled right redeem.
 Thy country's sons, by Truth's celestial flame,
 Shall purge the land of Usurpation's claim,
 Wreathing at last her crown of perfect good,
 Freedom and Peace and sacred Brotherhood.

89

PH16 88





